Western Viaduct over Belmont Corridor Improvement

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Project area

Project Overview

• The Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT) will remove the severely deteriorated and outdated viaduct over Belmont and replace it with a new five-leg at-grade intersection at Western, Belmont and Clybourn.

• The project will restore the fabric of the neighborhoods of Lakeview and Roscoe Village and create new opportunities for economic development and job creation. The project will improve safety and quality of life for the community.

• On completion, Western Avenue will have three lanes of traffic in each direction during rush hours, with curbside parking in some areas of the corridor during non-rush hours.

• Pedestrian safety improvements include refuge islands, bump-outs, high-visibility crosswalks, wider sidewalks, and the addition of pedestrian countdown signals at all signalized intersections. ADA ramps are also being installed at all the corners along the project corridor.

• The project was designed by CDOT and included an extensive community engagement process with input from Aldermen and constituents in the 32nd, 33rd and 47th Wards.

Key Project Benefits

- Remove viaduct and reconstruct intersection of Western, Belmont and Clybourn.
- Roadway improvements along a 1.27 mile stretch of Western from Jones to Waveland.
- Rehabilitate the Western Ave. Bridge over the North Branch of the Chicago River.
- Provide 13 foot sidewalks from Jones to Waveland.
- Provide 80 new parking spaces, improving access to retail businesses.
- Provide a third lane during peak travel times.
- Interconnected traffic signals to optimize traffic flow.
- Install pedestrian countdown timers at signals and ADA ramps at corners.
- Construct new landscaped medians with tree plantings on medians and sidewalks.

Typical median design with safety improvements

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River Bridge

Schedule and Traffic Impacts

- Construction to start March 2016
- Substantial completion anticipated Summer 2017
- Construction stages with approximate durations:

■ **Stage 1** – approximately five months
- Western Ave. reduced to one lane in each direction from George Street to Cornelia Avenue for viaduct demolition and removal, installation of temporary pavement and river bridge repairs. Access will be maintained to all businesses in the construction zone.
- Accelerated demolition of the viaduct decking requires a full lane closure of Western and Belmont on the weekend of March 4-7, 2016.
- During the first phase of construction, no left turns will be allowed from Western to cross streets between George and Roscoe Streets.

■ **Stages 2-3** – approximately eight months
- Two lanes of traffic in each direction on Western.
- Belmont reduced to one lane in each direction.
- Roadway installation and rehab.
- Sidewalk and curb work.

■ **Stages 4-5** – approximately four months
- Two lanes of traffic in each direction on Western and Belmont.
- Median work.
- Repaving.

CDOT advises motorists to avoid delays through the project area by taking alternate routes, particularly during the first six months. Ashland is recommended as an alternate north-south route. Diversey or Addison are recommended east-west alternates.

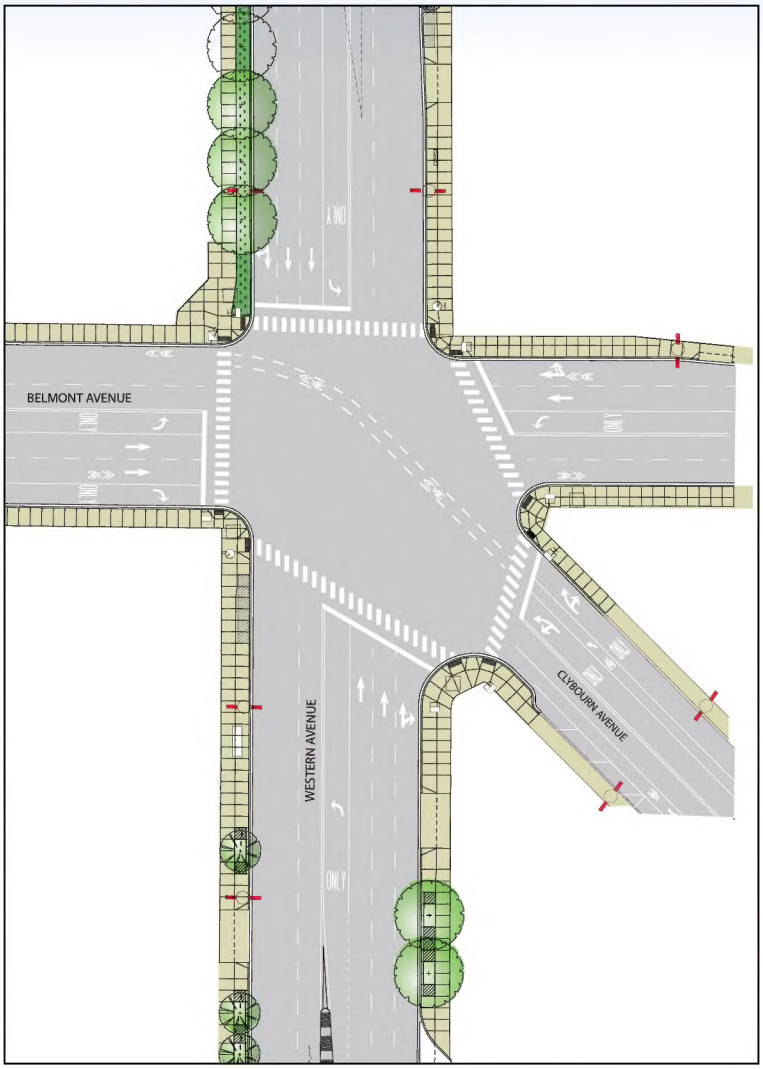
CTA routes will not be affected, except during the brief full closure. For more information, please call the CTA information hotline at: (all Chicagoland area codes) 836-7000 or visit **www.transitchicago.com**

For additional information, please call CDOT at cellphone (630) 514-2320, email: **westernavecdot@cityofchicago.org**, or visit **www.chicagodot.org**.
You can also follow CDOT on digital media at:
Twitter: **@ChicagoDOT**
Facebook: **www.facebook.com/CDOTNews**

Why is the Viaduct Being Torn Down and Not Replaced?

- CDOT evaluated two alternatives during the planning process: remove the viaduct and create at-grade intersections with corridor improvements; or replace the existing viaduct structure with a wider, more costly viaduct that would have required displacement of a number of homes and businesses along Western. The first alternative had the support of the community and the three Aldermen representing the affected communities.

- When construction is complete, Western will see an increase in lanes during rush hour from the current two lanes to three lanes in each direction. Traffic signals will be interconnected and will have the capacity to provide Transit Signal Priority for CTA buses, speeding up bus service.



New configuration of Western, Belmont and Clybourn

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